

# Report for ESF 2018 “The University and Esperanto”. Executive summary

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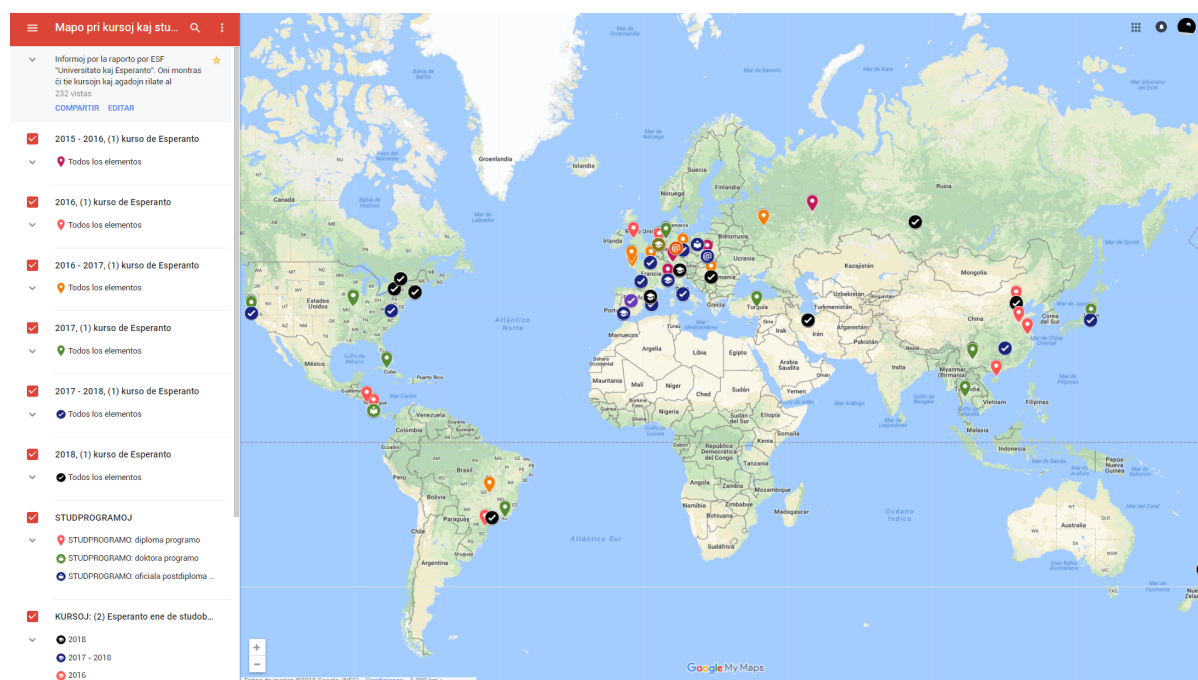
## Introduction

This is an executive summary of the Report for the Esperantic Studies Foundation (ESF) “The University and Esperanto”, compiled in 2018.<sup>1</sup> It reviews the current state of Esperanto and Interlinguistics in universities. The long version of the report also includes a section on the university situation in general, another one with proposals about strategies, and a series of methodological annexes about databases and surveys.

In this summary each paragraph has a reference to the page(s) of the long document to help find the details. The word “university” is here used in a broad sense in relation with higher education. The databases about the courses combine data from [Edukado.net/kursejo](http://Edukado.net/kursejo) and specific data collected in the last months for Kunagade.org through a call disseminated to 1300 email addresses and through different social networks and other channels (p. 38). They can be accessed online and downloaded at [kunagade.org/datumlistoj](http://kunagade.org/datumlistoj). These databases are the following:

- 1) Courses and general activities related to Esperanto
- 2) Journals, dictionaries and other publications
- 3) Specialized organizations, student associations, research groups and networks
- 4) People (professors, researchers, PhD students, librarians...)
- 5) Grants and funding possibilities
- 6) Other events related to Esperanto activities at universities
- 7) Ideas and proposals

Figure 1. Map of the courses and study programs related to Esperanto within higher education.



Source: Own elaboration using Google Maps

<sup>1</sup> The full report can be downloaded at <http://kunagade.org/raporto-esf-2018/>

## Teaching

NOTE: To understand the following data, the different courses have been classified in four types. K1 are courses on the Esperanto language; K2 are courses on a topic different from interlinguistics and esperantology which include Esperanto as part of their content; K3 are courses on interlinguistics and/or esperantology; K4 are courses on the Esperanto language and also on interlinguistics and/or esperantology. The same structure applies to the online courses (RT1, RT2, RT3, RT4).

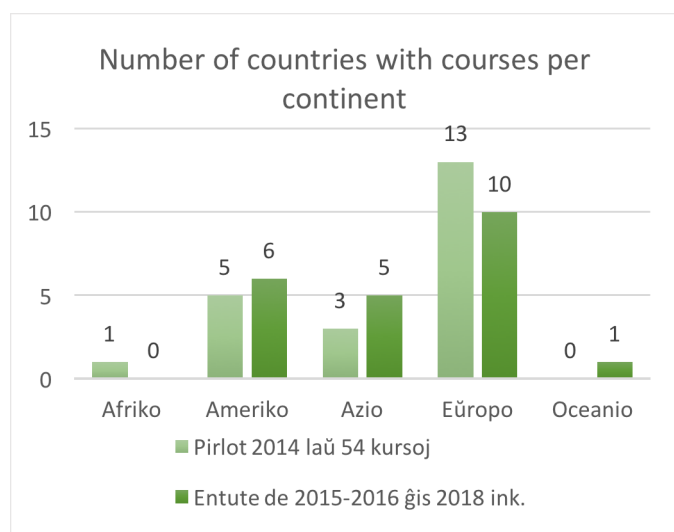
1. From 2015 to 2016 until the end of June 2018, 84 courses are listed in 22 countries and 49 cities. Regarding the kind of places where these courses are carried on, 80 are taught at universities/colleges, 3 at Universities of the Third Age or similar venues and 1 is organized by a university/student association/club (p. 12).

2. The courses do not disappear from one year to the following, and there are good reasons to think that there are more courses that have not been registered yet. Thus, the report written by Germain Pirlot in 2014 showed many countries for which there is no information in the years now explored; on another front, in social networks sometimes there are indications of courses in different countries, but without concrete information about them. For this reason, they have not been included in the databases (p. 13-14).

3. Taking into account the previous map and the graphs 2 and 3 (pp. 12-14), we can conclude that:

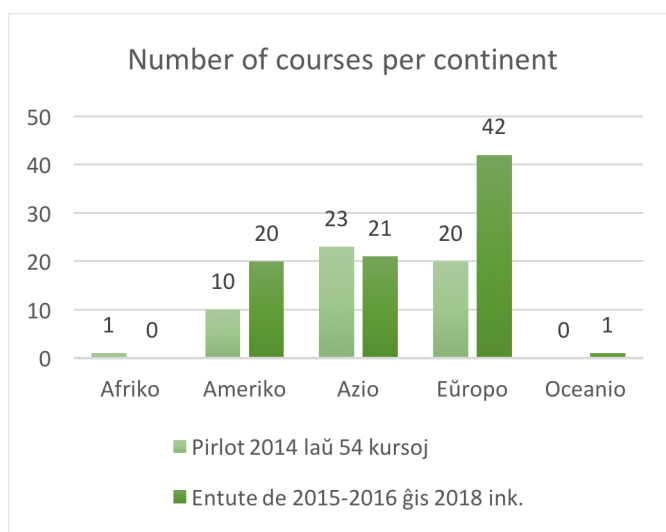
- There are many countries that despite having reported some information on Esperanto courses in 2014, since 2015-2016 have not registered a single course: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, South Korea, Croatia, Lithuania, Mexico and Madagascar. Before that, in 2012 Pirlot listed courses also in Russia and Costa Rica.
- Compared with the Pirlot report in 2014, some new countries have since appeared: Iran, Costa Rica, Romania, Russian Federation, Cuba, New Zealand, Thailand and Turkey.
- On the basis of the comparison in graphs 2 and 3, we can observe that no course was registered since 2015-2016 in places such as Africa, most of South America (except Brazil), the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia (except Iran), South-East Asia (except Thailand), Oceania, and several rich countries and regions, such as Scandinavia and Israel. As far as the number of courses and countries is concerned, Europe still plays the most important role.

Graph 2. Number of countries with courses per continent, according to table 1



Source: Own elaboration from databases in Kunagade.org and in the report by Germain Pirlot in 2014

Graph 3. Number of courses per continent, according to table 1



Source: Own elaboration from databases in Kunagade.org and in the report by Germain Pirlot in 2014

4. On the basis of their status (pp. 16-17,) during the first semester of 2018 there have been 17 courses:
  - 1 compulsory course: 1 K2. Interestingly, the only registered compulsory course which includes Esperanto in its content is in the discipline Psychology.
  - 7 elective courses: 3 K1, 2 K2 and 2K4. In some of these cases, Esperanto has a place within diverse disciplines, beyond the traditional interlinguistics and esperantology.
  - 7 independent courses: 5 K1, 2 RT3.
  - 2 other courses, about which we do not have specific details: both are K1.
5. As far as other programs are concerned, in 2017 there was a seminar in a PhD program in Costa Rica. Worth mentioning is also the 3-year program of the Interlinguistics Studies Programme in Poland (currently 2017-2020). Moreover, a new 4-year university degree will begin in China in 2018-2019 (p. 18).
6. Regarding qualifications in Esperanto teaching at university we have information about 66 (of the total 84) courses, which can be consulted through different tables in the database on courses at kunagade.org. Specific courses for Esperanto teachers are RITE, EIT, MITE. A specific database about these kinds of courses should be created. Worth mentioning is the possibility of using the EAQUALS certification to promote the quality of a course (p. 18).

## Research

7. For this report more than 1300 people were contacted, of whom 350 were directly concerned with education: teachers, professors, researchers, students, administrative workers, etc. Another database which will have to be explored in the future is the Brazilian platform LATTES. It includes more than 2600 resumés of BAs and PhDs (363 of them), researchers and professors, who indicate some knowledge of Esperanto. Collaboration with Esperanto events and specialized organizations connected with the world of universities would allow us to expand the database on people. This database has not been published yet, because it needs to be adapted to the GDPR –the new EU data protection regulation (p. 18-19).
8. As having funding to conduct research is relevant, the database at kunagade.org includes a number of possibilities for funding, such as ESF and Buchanan, and others through Erasmus+. There also exist other possibilities such as Horizon2020, government and foundation grants, although they have not been recorded yet. Some concrete projects are the following: two Erasmus+ KA1 grants on people's mobility, including an exchange of professors; and three Erasmus+ KA2 grants, one of which is *Multilingva Akcelilo* (246,450 EUR) with university partners and the other two are projects within the Esperanto movement. Worth mentioning is also the MIME project, which will be described in the next section. Interestingly, a number of Esperanto organizations have successful experience on funding possibilities, such as E@I, Kosmo Strategio Ltd., and TEJO (p. 19-20).
9. The database on specialized organizations includes 3 research groups and 8 networks. The research groups are *Filozofio*, *Scienco kaj Teknologioj* (Brazil, made up of 3 university researchers and 3 Esperanto-speakers, together with other people who do not speak the language), which publishes a journal that accepts articles in Esperanto; *Esperanto literature and WWII* (international, made up of a group of researchers, most of them Esperanto-speakers); and MIME, *Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe*, a European consortium which has benefited from an EU Commission grant (6,392,756.03 EUR) and which includes the participation of Esperanto-speakers and a significant role for Esperanto in the project. Among the networks, worth mentioning is the *Study Group on Language and the UN* and informal networks, such as a mailing list [universitato] in Yahoo with 143 members, and several Telegram groups (p. 20).
10. The database “Journals, dictionaries and other publications” includes 44 items: 4 bibliographic resources, 2 compilations of libraries, 2 dictionaries, 3 bulletins, 11 journals, 5 magazines, 17 compilations or lists of diverse topics. Moreover, every informant can add new categories to this database. As for libraries, worth mentioning are the recent steps taken in the US with the support of ESF. Also, at the World

Esperanto Congress (UK) in Lisbon there will be a special meeting on libraries. As far as journals are concerned, seven journals accept articles in Esperanto among other languages and four accept articles only in Esperanto (pp. 20-22).

### **Other information activities related to Esperanto at university**

11. Campaigning for Esperanto and interlinguistics is useful to increase the prestige of Esperanto. Informing about the language, its community and the possibilities for specialized studies is also relevant to attract university people. For this reason, the database about courses also includes the activities of the *Scientific Esperanto-circles* at Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland), and the campaign in France to acknowledge the Esperanto language diplomas B2 and C1 in public examinations for teachers (p. 22).

12. Together with the experience in France, there has been successful acknowledgment of an Esperanto diploma for public examination in high schools of the Galicia region, Spain (pp. 22). In fact, the acknowledgment and introduction of Esperanto in the state education system is assessed positively by 90% (80/89) of those who responded to the question “Would you like Esperanto to be introduced in the education system in your country?” in our survey.

13. The database “Other events related to Esperanto activities at university” includes so far: 1 workshop, 1 festival, 3 conferences, 1 congress, 3 meetings, 1 lecture, 1 prize, 1 session, and 4 symposiums. Some of them are the following: the *Pirlot Prize* awarded again in 2018, the *New York Symposium* in 2018 on “Multilingualism in International Organizations and International Collaboration” (with 100 participants), *Konferencoj de ILEI*, *Konferenco pri Apliko de Esperanto en Scienco kaj Tekniko (KAEST)*, the annual *Buchanan* lecture at the University of Liverpool, the *Interlinguistics Symposium* in Poznań (Poland), the *Nitobe-Symposium* in 2018 on the topic “teaching and research about Esperanto in (soci/inter) linguistics and in the social sciences”, and several events during the World Congress of Esperanto, such as *Internacia Kongresa Universitato (IKU)*, *Esperantologia Konferenco* and *Kunveno pri Bibliotekoj* (p. 23).

14. Exchange programs concerning Esperanto activities in universities are relevant, of only to avoid reinventing the wheel. In this regard, the report includes some information on the collaboration between the universities of Amsterdam and Parma in the context of Erasmus+, as well as the activities of the *Scientific Esperanto Circles*, with more details about its potential for the relationship between the University and Esperanto. From this perspective we should reflect on how to better collect and share information about positive experiences, facilitate exchanges and replicate and adapt successful models (pp. 23-24).

15. Three student organizations are listed in Spain, China and Brazil. Together with the *Scientific Esperanto Circles* they can be another way to act effectively for Esperanto in universities (p. 24).

### **Relations between the Esperanto community at university and outside it**

16. As for the relations between those people interested in Esperanto within the university and the Esperanto movement in general, the research carried out for this report shows strong links between the Esperanto community in universities and the Esperanto community outside. Often it is Esperanto associations, student organizations, museums, libraries, and individual Esperanto speakers that stimulate the progress of Esperanto activities within universities. However, despite their common goals, information sharing is insufficient and should definitely be improved (p. 25).

17. In the long version of the report there are several examples of collaboration between both communities and their common challenges, such as the lack of manpower. For example, the support of ESF and different Esperanto associations for postgraduate students in the *Interlinguistics Studies* at Poznan, the support of the Esperanto movement to the Esperanto Chair at the University of Amsterdam, the inclusion of Esperanto in the official list of language courses in the Spanish *National University of Distance Education (UNED)* with

the support of the Spanish Federation of Esperanto, the university activities of the International Organization of Youth Esperantists (TEJO) through its three commissions - *University*, *Science and Specialized Activities*, and *Education* – (and the information of one of them about its attempt to create a university student association with a European approach, as well as the creation of TEJO sections in other countries), the existence of the commission of *University Activities* in ILEI, the activities of Edukado.net under the guidance Katalin Kovats (e.g. on the official KER-diploma), other activities of ISAE, AIS and TEC, etc.

And the same can be said about other Esperanto events related to universities, financial support to researchers and Esperanto courses in higher education, often carried out with the support and collaboration of the Esperanto movement; similarly, the Esperanto movement also makes use of the work done by university professors, researchers, students, librarian and other experts.

Some thought should also be given to the IKEF warning related to the creation of the new 4-year university degree in China, where Esperanto plays a meaningful role. According to IKEF if there is not a clear market need for these students, the program could disappear. In order to prevent that, fruitful collaboration is required to promote the use of Esperanto professionally. Thus, steps toward Esperanto activities in universities also require steps within the Esperanto movement, and the other way round. From this perspective, there should be more debate about the extent to which the current crossroads of the Esperanto movement relate to its pragmatic approach (p. 25-27).

### **Some questions for the debate during the symposium**

- (a) What tools could assist us when teaching Esperanto and interlinguistics? And what tools could help researchers on these topics?
- (b) How can we facilitate the contacts among those already teaching courses and also among those who would like to do so, but are hesitant to do so?
- (c) What teaching tools do we already have and what do we still need? Do we also need other tools (e.g. informational materials)?
- (d) How can we reduce the gap between interlinguistics on the one hand and linguistics and the social sciences on the other?
- (e) How can we attract students to our courses? And researchers to our research projects? How can we make them stay and use Esperanto afterwards?
- (f) How can we include interlinguistics elements in other courses / research projects?
- (g) How can the existing Esperanto institutions / associations help and support teaching and research on Esperanto and interlinguistics?
- (h) Are there other institutions/foundations, beyond the traditional Esperanto ones, which could support such work?
- (i) Are there other possibilities of collaboration between Esperanto activities in universities and those outside them?
- (j) What should be the main goals of Esperanto activities in universities?